

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

This amendment cancels and changes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Claims 1-6, 9-17 and 21-30 were pending in the application. Claims 21 and 24 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 6 and 22 have been amended. Claims 1-5 and 12-17 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 6, 9-11, 22-23 and 25-30 are pending for consideration.

Allowable subject matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 9 and 25-30 are allowed, and that claim 24 “is maintained allowed for the reasons set forth in the prior Office action if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.” Applicants note that the outstanding Office action contains no rejection of claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, since the Office Action indicates on page 2 that the rejection of claims 9 and 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph has been withdrawn. Claim 6 has been amended to include all the limitations of claim 24, which has been canceled. In light of the fact that there is no outstanding rejection of claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, claim 6 is now in *prima facie* condition for allowance. Claims 10, 11 and 22-23 ultimately depend from claim 6, and are thus likewise in *prima facie* condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 6, 10 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,413,449 to Wieland et al. (hereafter “Wieland”) in view of U.S. Patent 4,501,823 to Masuda (hereafter “Masuda”). Claims 21-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wieland in view of Masuda, and further in view of U.S. Patent 4,058,485 to Cheung (hereafter “Cheung”). These rejections are moot in light of the amendment to independent claim 6 (dependent claims 10, 11 and 22-23 ultimately depend from independent claim 6) to include subject matter indicated as allowable in the Office Action, and in light of the cancellation of claim 21.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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